

Message Text

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SUBJECT: GISCARD'S FIGARO INTERVIEW/: BASIC PRINCIPLES
OF FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY

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REF: PARIS 29339 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY AND COMMENT ON GENERAL FOREIGN POLICY SECTION OF GISCARD'S FIGARO INTERVIEW. FULL TEXT SENT TO DEPT IN SEPTTEL.

2. IN RESPONSE FIGARO CHARGE THAT MAIN LINES OF FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY ARE UNCLEAR, AND IN VIEW OF SOME DOES NOT EVEN EXIST, GISCARD UNDERTOOK TO REVIEW FRANCE'S BASIC FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES.

3. FRANCE, GISCARD EXPLAINED, IS NO LONGER CONDUCTING A FOREIGN POLICY OF CONFRONTATION. THERE ARE TENSIONS IN THE WORLD. BUT FRANCE HAS NO "ADVERSARIES" WHO THREATEN IT DIRECTLY. WHAT'S MORE, ITS FOREIGN POLICY IS NOT CLEAR AND SIMPLE BECAUSE FRANCE DOES NOT BELONG TO ANY SYSTEM, SUCH AS THE AMERICAN SYSTEM. THERE ARE COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD WHOSE FOREIGN POLICY CONSISTS OF NOT HAVING A FOREIGN POLICY, AND WHO THEREFORE MUST ACCEPT THE POLICY OF OTHERS. THIS AVOIDS QUESTIONS. FRANCE'S FOREIGN POLICY TAKES ON ITS COMPLEXITY BECAUSE IT TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE DIVERSITY AND UNCERTAINTY OF CURRENT WORLD PROBLEMS.

4. GISCARD THEN CITED FOUR FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AS GOVERNING FRANCE'S CURRENT FOREIGN RELATIONS:

A. THE WISH FOR INDEPENDENCE. THIS, HE SAID, USED TO BE A SUBJECT OF CONTROVERSY BUT SEEMS INCREASINGLY ACCEPTED AND JUSTIFIED BY THE EVOLUTION OF THE WORLD'S SECURITY SITUATION;

B. THE WILL TO BRING ABOUT EUROPEAN UNIFICATION.

C. FRANCE'S PREFERENCE FOR DETENTE, WHICH GISCARD DEFINED AS THE CONVERSE OF CHOOSING A POLICY OF CONFRONTATION;

D. FRANCE'S DESIRE FOR A POLICY OF COOPERATION AMONG THE WORLD'S GOVERNMENTS, PARTICULARLY WITH THOSE OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD.
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5. THE FIRST AND THIRD OF THESE PRINCIPLES GISCARD DESCRIBED AS CONTINUATIONS OF THE LINES SET BY HIS "GREAT PREDECESSORS." THE SECOND AND FOURTH PRINCIPLES ARE DERIVED FROM IDEAS THAT HE HIMSELF IS TRYING TO DEVELOP.

6. COMMENT: NONE OF THE ABOVE WILL STRIKE READERS AS

PARTICULARLY STARTLING, ALTHOUGH GISCARD WAS CLEARLY AT
PAINS TO INTRODUCE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN HIS OWN AND HIS
PREDECESSORS' APPROACH TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THAT FIGARO
POSED THE QUESTION AS IT DID AND GISCARD FELT IT NECES-
SARY TO ANSWER BY REITERATING THESE FUNDAMENTALS REIN-
FORCES AN IMPRESSION THAT EVEN INFORMED FRENCH OPINION
MAY BE SOMEWHAT CONFUSED AS TO THE PURPOSES OF MUCH OF
GOF'S CURRENTLY HIGHLY PERIPATETIC FOREIGN EFFORTS.
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